



Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services

Greetings from HFS Director Julie Hamos

Welcome to another periodic edition of ***HFS e-news*** to keep you updated on program changes. To register for future editions, please visit [HFS E-News Online Registration](http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/enews) or download for others who might be interested by visiting: [hfs.illinois.gov/enews](http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/enews)

Thank you,

Julie Hamos

Care Coordination Innovations Project Solicitation Now Available

We are pleased to announce that the solicitation for Phase I of the Care Coordination Innovations Project has been released. We believe the solicitation will allow providers to design and offer new service delivery models to provide effective care coordination services that produce better health outcomes for Medicaid clients and render cost savings for the Medicaid program. The solicitation is posted on the HFS Web site at [Care Coordination Innovations Project](http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/enews). Letters of intent are due on February 29, 2012. The due date for submitting proposals is May 25, 2012. To maintain full transparency, any questions on the solicitation must be submitted in writing, using the procedures outlined in the solicitation.

In addition, there is now a Care Coordination Matchmaker feature on the HFS Web site. Many community partners have asked how they can identify other organizations in their area, see if they are serving their populations, and may be interested in collaboration in response to the solicitation. The Matchmaker database is an optional service being offered by HFS to help partners find each other, build relationships, offer their services and/or help develop Care Coordination Entities. This is voluntary, not mandatory. Information about your organization can be submitted on the [HFS Matchmaker Submission Web page](http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/enews). Your organization can search for other partners on the [HFS Search for Partners Web page](http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/enews).

New Nursing Home Eligibility Rules to Take Effect

As of January 1, new stringent rules for Medicaid long-term care eligibility have taken effect. Based on federal law, the state will now conduct a 5-year "look-back" to determine whether the person (or spouse) applying for Medicaid long-term care services transferred assets improperly to family or others, and to apply a penalty accordingly. Hardship waivers will be granted in some instances. Persons also will be required to disclose interests in annuities, promissory notes, loans, or mortgages, and to name the state as a remainder beneficiary, so that the state can recover long-term care costs upon the person's death. A new page on the HFS Website will be available in February, with questions and answers on these rules.

Federal Dollars Available for Electronic Health Records

Medicaid practitioners and hospitals who adopt and implement electronic health records and become “Meaningful Users” can receive incentive payments for the next five years, in a time-limited federal opportunity. Achieving Meaningful Use, particularly through e-prescribing, electronic lab results and sharing information among providers will reduce duplicative and unnecessary treatments, and will pave the way to care coordination. In Illinois, more than 7,000 individual providers and almost 100 hospitals have registered to become Meaningful Users of electronic health records.

Illinois has two Regional Extension Centers to assist providers in selecting and implementing electronic health records and becoming Meaningful Users. For information and assistance outside of Chicago, visit the Illinois Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center at <http://www.ilhitrec.org> and for providers in the City of Chicago, visit the Chicago Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center at: <http://www.chitrec.org>

The Office of Health Information Technology also has announced the ILHIE Direct Secure Messaging service to help healthcare providers in reaching Stage 1 Meaningful Use **at no cost**, starting December 2011 and throughout 2012. Secure messaging allows providers to quickly achieve clinical exchange for Stage 1 Meaningful Use by sharing clinical data through secure and encrypted e-mail capability. To sign up for ILHIE Direct, visit the [ILHIE Direct – Secure Messaging Solution Web page](#).

Eligibility Verification for Medical Benefits Including All Kids

HFS is preparing to implement new eligibility verification procedures to verify Illinois residency and to eliminate what is referred to as “passive redetermination” of eligibility. HFS will use electronic data matches, including matches with the Secretary of State’s records to confirm that applicants and clients reside in Illinois. This eligibility reforms are the result of the State of Illinois’ bipartisan Medicaid reform legislation (Public Act 96-1501) which was enacted in January 2011. While this change in eligibility procedures is not expected to result in major financial savings, it is important for the integrity of the Medicaid program and to assure the public that tax dollars are being used only for the population it is intended to support. Other eligibility verification changes related to income will be implemented as well. We appreciate the assistance rendered by the Office of Secretary of State and the Department of Human Services to put this change into place.

HFS Web Site Has New Look

The Department of Healthcare and Family Services has a new Web site design, intended to make all of our programs and policies more accessible and enhance our communication with community partners. The Home Page scrolls on some of our current programs. Check out the [HFS Web site](#)!

Please feel free to ask questions or share comments by e-mailing: hfs.webmaster@illinois.gov